On the Cure of fevers

Dr Hillary favours this Opinion in the history of an epidemic fever in Barbados which terminated on the 19th day. One of his patients in the course of the fever lost Air of blood from the hæmorrhoidal vessels, and yet the fever ran its course & did not terminate till the 14th day. Sir Jno Pringle likewise favours this opinion, as appears by the following extract from his Letter to Mr [illegible]. It is no Objection to this character of certain fevers, that Intermittents are said to be cured by Bark immediately after they are formed. But this is not the case. The Intermittent runs its course in spite of all that is usually done to prevent it. The Bark only prevents its return, on a relapse of the fever by obviating the debility upon which it depends. I conclude therefore that there is

We proceed next to speak of the Cure of fever, after it is formed; and here an important question meets us, and that is, is fever a curable disease, that is do we ever cure fevers, or do we only prevent death by our remedies until fevers have ran their course, and terminated of themselves. Dr Cleghorn supposes we never cure the remitting fever of warm climates after it is completely formed. This is certainly a foundation for this opinion of Dr Cleghorn as far as it extends to fevers which are under the dominion of critical days, such as the bilious fevers of all countries. The opinion is favoured by the analogy of the small pox - measles & hooping cough which always run their course in spite of all

weakness & perhaps
the Syncope thus induced, favoured
the blood vessels resuming their natural
and healthy actions.

that there is

that we can do to assist or cure them. But to
this remark of Dr Cleghorn ~~is to be added~~
there are certainly many exceptions. I shall
briefly mention them.

1. There were several instances of the extinc-
-tion of yellow fever after it was formed in
this city in the year 1793 from profuse
hemorrhages from the nose, and from the
arm after bloodletting. Dr Moseley says similar
cures took place in the west Indies of the
yellow fever, from the same cause. Pa-
-tients he says awoke free from fever in
a bath of their own blood. Sir Jno Pringle
says he has seen fevers remit from a
spontaneous bleeding from the nose, but
never saw a cure performed by it. The
hemorrhage in this case was probably
small, compared with those which I
have mentioned in the yellow fever.

2 La Colera morbus has sometimes
suddenly cured a fever after it was

that there is

completely formed. Sir Jno. Pringle says the only cures he ever saw of a fever when formed, was by this intestinal disease. I have seen several cures of yellow fever by the same remedy in the hands both of nature and art.

3 Profuse Sweats. These it is said, have sometimes extinguished a fever. ~~Bird~~ Sir Jno. Pringle bears a testimony against their efficacy in the history of a Mr Annesly a mate in the British military hospitals in Germany whom he attempted to cure on the 4th and 5th days of a fever with cordial & sudorific medicines. ~~The~~ Sweats it is true he says were excited, but the fever continued until the 27th day, when it gently terminated with a moisture all over his body & a sediment in his Urine.

My experience is against all cures at=
=tempted in this way. I have seen
~~the~~ a mild fever rendered inflam.y & &
violent, and even death induced by the
profuse sweats which have been forced
from the body in the first stage of fevers.

4 a strong dose of Opium. Of the efficacy
of this remedy in extinguishing a fever
After it was formed, two instances have
occurred in Philad.a - one in which it was
given by mistake, and the other by a
physician ~~in this city~~.

5 Large doses of Bark given in the first
or second remission of a bilious fever
so as reduce the blood vessels down to Opposition
or completely to prostrate them. I have
known this remedy to succeed, ~~or~~ but
the cure was always followed by obstru=
=tions in the viscera, or the most

distressing nervous affections. A Gentle=
=man from South Carolina who was
cured in this way of a fever by a
~~Gentleman~~ Physician in London of
great humanity of manners, said of
him to one of his friends afterwards.
"He gained my affections by his humanity,
but he ruined my constitution at the
same time by his remedies."
6 Large draughts of Ardent ~~wa~~ and ~~di~~ fer=
=mented liquors. These extinguish a
fever when they bring on drunkenness
only. I have known death to be
induced in two instances by ~~those~~ one
of those liquors, viz a bottle of Wine
taken after the formation of the
fever. —
7 The Pediluvium. I cannot say I

9 The hot and cold Bath used in succession ~~I shall mention~~ after the manner of the Indians. I shall describe this remedy & its success hereafter.

10 Violent frictions, and carrying heavy Weights.

I shall speak of both these remedies hereafter.

I never saw a single instance of a fever being cured by this remedy. On the contrary, I have seen it in many instances increase the fever & even induce delirium, and perhaps contribute to a fatal issue of the disease. —

8 Affusions of Cold Water. Dr Currie says he cured fevers on the 3rd, 4th & 5th days with this remedy, but never after they had passed the 5th day.

11 ~~If the~~ sudden emotions of the mind. Joy, anger, and terror have in many instances, appeared to cut short the duration of fevers. Dr McLean mentions a remarkable instance of the terror excited ~~on~~ by a storm during a ~~pestilence~~ fever on board of the middlesex Indiaman on her way to India. A Battle in two instances had the same effect in ~~the~~ two ships of war belonging to

~~to the British Drawings~~

of the hot and cold Bath used after the Indian manner, and thus described by Willm Penn in a letter to Dr Baynard dated Pennsylvania in the year 1683.

"Being upon a discovery upon the back part of the Country, I called upon an Indian of note who was the Captain General of the Clans of the Indians in those parts. I found him ill of a fever. His head & limbs were much affected with pain, and at the same time his wife was preparing a Bagnio for him. The Bagnio resembled a large oven into which he crept by a door upon the one side, while his wife put several

red hot stones into a small door on
the other side, and then fastned the
door as closely from the external air as she could. Now while
he was sweating in this Bagnio, his
wife was cutting a passage for her hus-
band into the river (being the Winter
of 1683 in which there was a great
frost, and the ice very thick) in order
to the immersing himself after he
came out of his Bath. In less than
half an hour he was in so great
a sweat, that when he came out, he
was as wet as if he had come out of a
river, and the steam from his body so
thick that it was hard to discern
any body's face that stood near him.
In this Condition, with his breach-

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clout only on him) he ran to the river, which was about 20 paces from his Bagnio, and ducked him=self twice or thrice therein, and so returned, passing thro his Bagnio to mitigate the stroke of the cold to his own house which was about 20 paces further, where after wrapping himself up in his woolen mantle he ~~laid~~ lay down at full length, near a long, but gen=tle fire in the middle of his Wigwam, turning himself several times until he was dry, when he arose, and assis=ted in getting us dinner, seeming to be as easy, and as well in health as at any other time". The Russians

use a Bath similar to that which I have described, not for the Cure of Diseases, but for the preservation of health.

10 Overstretching the ~~ass~~ body. The Indians avail themselves of this remedy by suspending themselves by the arm of the affected side in a Rheu=
=ey upon the limb of a tree. —

11 Powerful Friction. Capt Cook was cured in a single night in one of the friendly Islands, of an acute Rheuma=
=tism by being severely rubbed for one hour by one of the natives from which he experienced great pain. He was perfectly well the next day.

12 Violent exercise or labor. I shall

hereafter informs you that a farmer in Scotland cured the most acute & inflammatory ~~state~~ ~~by~~ of madness by compelling his patients to perform the labor of horses by ~~work~~ working them in his ploughs.

13 hidden emotions of the mind. Joy anger & terror have in many instances appeared to cut short the duration of fever. Dr M'Clen mentions a remarkable instance of the terror excited by a sea storm causing a fever on board the Middlesex Indiaman on her Voyage to India. a battle in two instances had the same effect on board ~~the~~ two ships belonging to

the British Navy. —

~~to the British Army.~~ —

Upon all those modes of ~~inflamatory~~ suddenly equallizing the excitement of the system and thereby curing fevers before they had run their natural course, I ~~would~~ shall make two remarks. 1 How do we know the cures were not performed upon one of those days on which the fever would have terminated of its own accord? all fevers I shall say ~~here after~~ tend to a solution of certain days which have been called critical. These days are unknown or imperfectly known by physicians, & the cure supposed to have been performed by the above remedies, may have accidentally coincided with the natural termination of the fever. — But 2ly admitting these cures to have

this fever was probably of a
feeble nature, in which there was
no danger of disorganizing any
part of the body, ~~but in cases of~~
~~violent fever they ought by no means~~
~~be employed by a physician~~ or
it was of a centrifugal direction as
Rheumatism in which there was
no danger of injury to the viscera, or
it was in Indian Constitutions, or in
constitutions equally robust. That an
Indian Constitution is necessary to bear
~~that~~ one of the remedies I have mentioned
I infer from a fact ~~[illegible]~~ related in
M'Penn's letter just now quoted, and
that is, ~~that the bots [illegible]~~ after the
Indians became debilitated by their

been real, and the remedies that have been mentioned, to have actually extinguish=ed, or strangled a fever. In cases of violent fever in persons of vitiated habits, ~~yet they should~~ ~~never violent~~ ~~be employed no~~ ~~by no means~~ ~~of them of fever~~ remedies should be employed by a physician ~~cases by a physician~~. They sometimes suddenly destroy life, but where they have not this effect, they do great violence to the system by rupturing blood vessels or inducing obstructions in the viscera, or fixing a disease upon the brain or nerves for ~~life~~ which ~~there~~ is often no cure. These remedies may be compared when used in ~~violent~~ fevers of great morbid action, to the risk of storming a citadel the first day an army arrives before it, while its garrison is in high health and spirits, instead of attack=ing ~~by~~ it by regular approaches, and com=pelling the garrison to submit from an

intercourse with the white people, they pe=
=rished in the use of that violent remedy.

Let it not be supposed that I wish
to restrain attempts to cure fevers by
remedies that act suddenly & powerfully
by exciting the excitement of
the System. It is possible ~~they~~
in a more improved state of medicine
those who fill our places, may be as
much struck with our folly in per=
=mitting fevers to run their course,
as we are in viewing the practice
of our forefathers who ~~law~~ left fevers ~~to~~
in the hands of nature to be cured by
~~cases terminating~~ abscesses, remembering
that abscesses ~~with~~ in every part of the
body. — It is certain we strangle many
diseases in their first stage ~~to~~ as I shall
say hereafter, particularly gout, mania,
palsy & apoplexy. In our ~~prompt~~ success
in these cases to be ascribed to their being
artificial diseases? and does nature forbid
the same success in such as are natural, or

exhausted state of their provisions and ammunition. In making these remarks ~~which I have delivered have~~ In delivering cautions against the attempts to storm fevers out of the system, I must bear testimony against an opinion now very popular in Great Britain, and that is, that fevers cure themselves, or that they do not terminate in death when left to run their course. It may be true with some of the mild fevers of that country in which patients recover under the use of the spirit of Mindereus - James's powder & ablutions of cold water; but the fevers of this country require a very different mode of treatment. Even the mildest of our autumnal fevers end in death or chronic diseases or disorders when not met

common in uncivilized ~~to~~ and sim=
=ple life – such as fevers?—

by depleting, or stimulating remedies, or by both of them in their successive stages. If we do not ~~[illegible]~~ shorten the duration of a fever by our remedies we lessen its violence, and thereby save the system from ~~permanent~~ slow consumption or permanent disorders. In this respect we imitate the mariner in a storm, ~~who~~ with a ~~[illegible]~~ leaky vessel. He is unable ~~does not attempt~~ to compose the winds, and the leaky parts of his ship are beyond the reach of his skill to stop them. In this situation he throws part of his cargo overboard, and thus lessens the ~~[illegible]~~ leaks in his ship ~~induced by its weight~~ induced by its weight. ~~[illegible]~~ When the ~~wind~~ storm subsides, he gently expands his sails, ~~and~~ to be ~~[illegible]~~ stimulated by gentle breezes of wind, and thus conducts his

This advice accords exactly with that given by Dr Sydenham for the cure of fever. His words are "The physician has nothing more to do ~~than~~ to suit the treatment to the nature of the disease, so as on the one hand to prevent its rising too high, and causing dangerous symptoms, and on the other hand to keep it from sinking so low as to ~~keep it for~~ be unable to expel the morbid matter", or in more ~~correct~~ familiar language to ~~[illegible]~~ consider a fever in the same light that we do a pot of water ~~[illegible]~~ upon a fire, ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~the fire~~ that we wish to preserve at a moderate temperature. When it boils over upon ~~[illegible]~~ the fire. When it becomes too cool – increase the fire.

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his ship ~~and~~ in safety to his wished for harbour. V

I have mentioned ~~said that it would be safe to attempt~~ the dangers of attempting ~~the attempt~~ to shorten the Duration of violent fevers by powerful ~~thus~~ depleting or stimulating remedies; I shall now add, that ~~Still in this~~ Dr we often save life by prolonging their Duration. ~~by means of depleting remedies.~~ A fever which would have killed by its violence in its first paroxysm is often protracted to a 3rd a 5. and a 7th paroxysm by means of depleting remedies, and ~~life thus~~ the System thereby saved from destruction. ~~It is this card of~~ The physician who thus prolongs the disease & the life of his patient seldom gets any credit by his skill - for neither his patient nor the public know ought of the nature

of a fever to do him justice. —

The Remedies for fever when for=
=med are sedative & stimulating. I
shall first treat upon sedatives. ~~They~~
you will find a Catalogue of them in
our Syllabus. They ~~find of these are~~ are indicated in
~~Bloodletting~~ the malignant — the
Synochus fortis — the Synoka — the Synoka
and occasionally in the Synochoid — the
hectic ~~Synochus~~ ~~and the~~ Synochus pitis ~~chronic~~ ~~the~~ in some of the forms of fever,
or in other words in all those forms of
fever in which there are marks of
morbid excitement above the natural
force of the pulse. The ~~1~~ of these
Remedies is ~~Bloodletting~~ Bloodletting. In manus,
and of these the 1 is Bloodletting.